

## **Watchful walking**

As pleasant and enjoyable as walking may be, it's important to be aware of safety when on foot in the outdoors. Here are 10 tips for safe walking:

- Carry identification (name, address, contact phone number and relevant medical information).
- Wear a medical alert bracelet or necklace if you have conditions such as diabetes, allergy to bee stings or anything that might result in an emergency.
- Use proper footwear to help avoid slipping if it's icy or rainy.
- Carry a cell phone.
- When possible walk with a companion.
- Make sure contacts know your regular walking routes and walk in familiar areas but altering the pattern.
- Avoid unpopulated areas and overgrown trails. Avoid unlit areas at night.
- Be defensive about traffic and don't assume a car will stop even if you have the right of way.
- Wear reflective material when walking after dark.
- Carry a whistle or noisemaker. Some people carry pepper spray in case of dog attacks.

– *source: Mayo Clinic*